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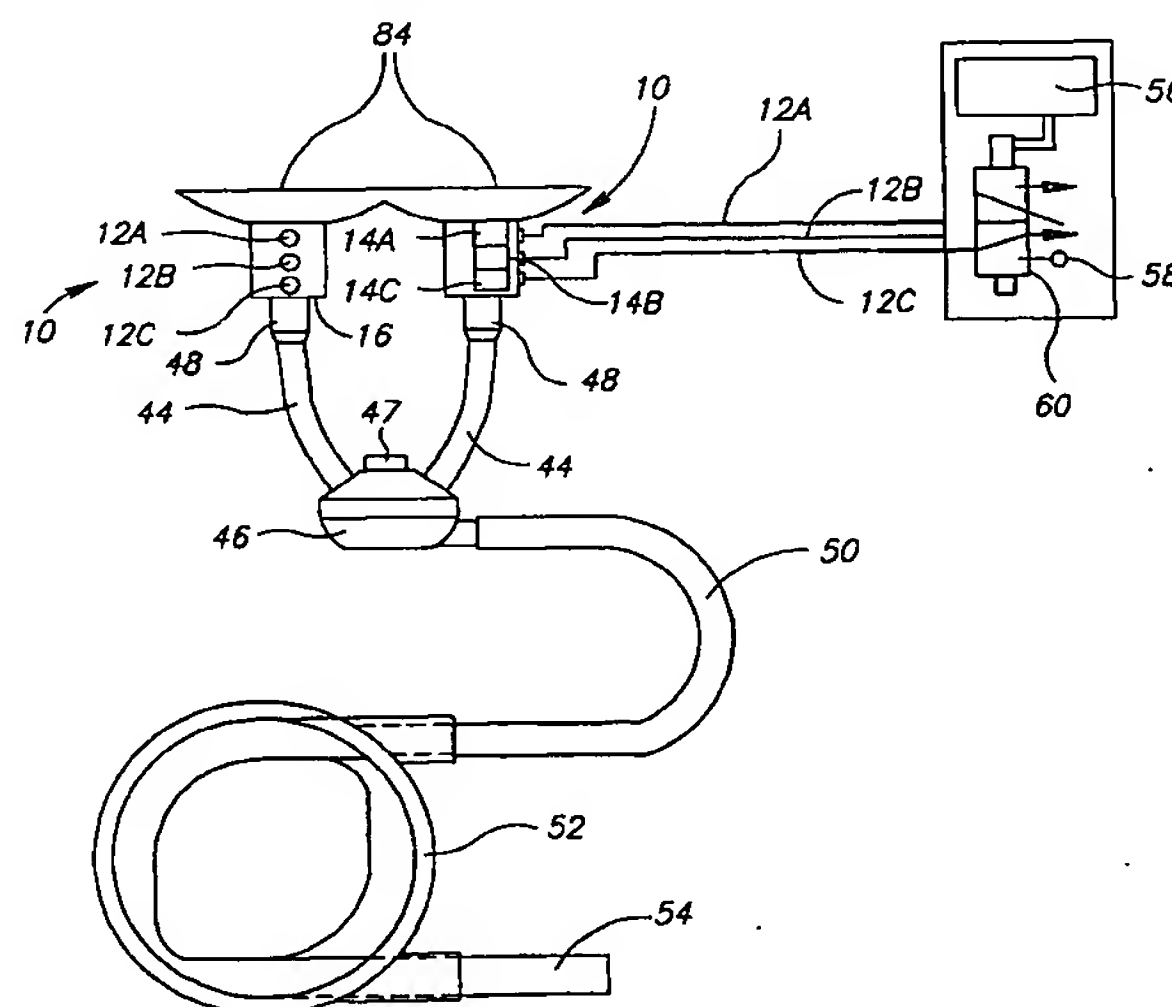
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(54) Title: **MILKING APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR USE THEREOF**



(57) Abstract: An apparatus (10) for gripping the teat of an animal assisting in drawing milk therefrom. The apparatus (10) includes a housing and more than one constricting element (14a-c) arranged in the housing so that the constricting elements (14a-c), which are operable in both constricting (14a-c) and non-constricting modes, periodically constrict the teat. The apparatus (10) further includes means for switching the constricting elements (14a-c) back and forth between non-constricting and constricting modes. The apparatus (10) includes a controller (56) in communication with the means for switching, which in accordance with a predetermined timing and spatial sequence controls the periodic switching of the constricting elements (14a-c) from constricting to non-constricting modes and vice-versa. A system including such a gripping apparatus (10) for drawing milk from the teat of an animal is also taught. Similarly, a method for milking an animal which imitates hand milking and does not employ a vacuum system is described.

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